

The Fastershire programme is a **major and often complex engineering project** but the rollout is progressing well.

It's a partnership between **Herefordshire Council, Gloucestershire County Council and BT**, and we're all working together to make the project a success and to identify and resolve any remaining gaps using a variety of solutions.

More than 9,650 homes and businesses now have access to fibre broadband in Herefordshire. Over **250kms of fibre cable has been laid** so far across the entire project area.

Fastershire has so far **delivered fibre to 43 cabinets in 10 exchange areas** across Herefordshire, including Bartestree Cross, Burghill, Carey, Gorsley, Hereford, Lea, Much Marcle, Ross on Wye, Symonds Yat and Upton Bishop.

Current work to deliver fibre, stand up cabinets and activate lines in Carey, Gorsley, Harewood End, How Caple, Lea, Llangarron, Much Marcle, Ross-On-Wye, Skenfrith, St. Weonards, Symonds Yat and Upton Bishop is expected to complete by the end of March 2015.

Work in Bartestree Cross, Bridge Sollars, Bromyard, Burghill, Burley Gate, Canon Pyon, Fownhope, Hereford, Holme Lacy, Madley, Michaelchurch, Pencombe, Peterchurch, Pontrilas, Sutton St. Nicholas, Tarrington, Trumpet, Weobley, Wormbridge, and Wormelow is expected to complete by the end of June 2015.

Surveying and planning is going on in Clifford, Crucorney, Gladestry, Hay on Wye, Longtown Castle and Tintern.

Future work will deliver fibre to 33 exchange areas, with surveying and planning in 20 areas to be carried out in the next year, and the rollout of faster broadband to these areas expected to be completed by the end of 2016. A minimum of 2mbps will be made available to all premises in the project area by the end 2016.

Challenges and obstacles faced during the rollout so far have included duct blockages where our engineers either have to clear out or in extreme cases replace whole sections of duct. **We've had to lay an additional 1,181 metres of new duct and build 17 new joint boxes to get fibre cable to Harewood End. In How Caple, our engineers came across a 1km continuous length of underground duct which was blocked.**

Our engineers faced a series of unexpected challenges to lay fibre lay fibre optic cable under the A40 in order to reach Symonds Yat, but working with Herefordshire Council's Highways Department and the Highways Agency using specialist techniques we were able to reduce the amount of digging and avoid any closure of the A40.

In Lea, our team have faced significant challenges getting an electricity connection to some of the new cabinets, and we are working with Western Power to get them connected. This means we are having to close roads to provide power cable ducting and we are working to do this with minimum disruption.

In 2014 we completed a new Open Market Review for the next phase of Fastershire's rollout – **the Superfast Extension Programme**. This year we will carry out the evaluation and procurement stages of the SEP, making use of this additional funding of **£5.52m to extend Fastershire's reach in Herefordshire** and help us deliver our ultimate goal of providing access to superfast broadband for everyone who needs it by the end of 2018.

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